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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
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Agenda item 9

FURTHER PROMOTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS
AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF
THE PROGRAMME AND METHODS OF WORK OF THE COMMISSION

Algeria*, Cape Verde, China, Colombia*, Congo, Cuba, Democratic
People's Republic of Korea*, Egypt*, El Salvador, Ethiopia*,
Guinea, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of)*, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya*, Mexico, Mozambique, Nigeria*, Peru, Senegal,
Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic*, Togo*, United Republic
of Tanzania*, Venezuela, Viet Nam* and Yemen*: draft resolution

1998/... Composition of the staff of the Office of
the High Commissioner for Human Rights

The Commission on Human Rights,

Recalling that, in its report to the Special Commission of the Economic and Social Council (E/CN.4/1988/85 and Corr.1), the Commission on Human Rights reaffirmed that the paramount consideration for employing staff at every level was the need for the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity and was convinced that this objective was compatible with the principle of equitable geographical distribution and took into account Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations,

* In accordance with rule 69, paragraph 3, of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

GE.98-11950 (E)

Recalling also part II, paragraphs 11 and 17, of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action in which the World Conference on Human Rights requested the Secretary-General and the General Assembly to provide sufficient human, financial and other resources to the Centre for Human Rights to enable it effectively, efficiently and expeditiously to carry out its activities, while recognizing the necessity for restructuring United Nations human rights machinery, in accordance with its real needs,

Taking into account the need to pay particular attention to the recruitment of personnel for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights from developing countries, thus improving the present staff composition, based on a more equitable geographical distribution,

Noting with concern that the report submitted by the High Commissioner to the Commission on the geographical composition and the functions of the staff of her Office (E/CN.4/1998/52) pursuant to resolution 1997/76, clearly reflects that one region is unequivocally overrepresented in the staff composition,

Expressing its concern again over the under-representation of the developing countries within the Office of the High Commissioner, particularly bearing in mind the criteria of equitable geographical distribution,

1. Takes note of the report of the High Commissioner on the composition of the staff of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (E/CN.4/1998/52);
2. Welcomes the statement of the High Commissioner to the Third Committee of the General Assembly at its fifty-second session, in which she expressed her willingness to ensure a good geographical balance and a sense of bringing together North and South in a joint commitment to human rights, in the process of filling key senior positions in the Office as well as the post of Deputy High Commissioner;
3. Reaffirms that Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations should guide the Secretary-General in his policy for recruiting the staff of the Organization, particularly mindful of the criteria of equitable geographical distribution;
4. Considers that it is necessary, within the process of restructuring the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, to take urgent, concrete and immediate action to change the currently prevailing geographical distribution of the staff of the Office, in favour of a more

equitable distribution of posts, in accordance with Article 101 of the Charter, particularly by recruiting personnel from developing countries, including to key posts;

5. Requests the Secretary-General to take the necessary measures to ensure that particular attention is paid to recruiting personnel from developing countries for the existing vacancies and for other additional posts in the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights so as to ensure equitable geographical distribution, giving particular priority in this regard to recruitment for high-level and Professional posts and to the recruitment of women;

6. Requests once again the Secretary-General, in signing agreements with countries as a result of which junior professional officers are provided to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, to urge those countries to ensure the allocation of additional financial resources to guarantee that personnel from developing countries are able to work as junior professional officers, with a view to conforming to the principle of equitable geographical distribution; furthermore, a permanent mechanism must be established, by virtue of which every junior professional officer from a donor country who joins the Office will be matched by another junior professional officer from a developing country;

7. Emphasizes the importance of openly advertising all posts, including ad hoc appointments for field operations, including the dissemination of detailed job descriptions among all States prior to filling those posts;

8. Requests the High Commissioner for Human Rights to ensure that junior professional officers are not given sensitive political assignments where their impartiality may be questioned;

9. Reaffirms the importance of ensuring universality, objectivity and non-selectivity in the consideration of human rights issues, and requests the High Commissioner to continue ensuring that the fulfilment of her mandate and that of the Office is guided by these principles;

10. Requests the High Commissioner to submit a comprehensive report on the implementation of the present resolution to the Commission at its fifty-fifth session which should include:

- (a) The composition of the staff of the Office, organized by United Nations regional groups and reflecting, inter alia, grade, nationality and gender, including with regard to non-regular staff;
 - (b) Measures adopted to improve the current situation and their results;
 - (c) Recommendations to improve the current situation;
11. Decides to consider this matter under the same agenda item at its fifty-fifth session.
